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Six Four-part Songs. (S.A.T.B.) By J. Lemmens.

- No. 1. *Drops of Rain.* Poetry by William Duthie.
 2. *The Fairy Ring.* Ditto.
 3. *The Light of Life.* Ditto.
 4. *Oh, welcome him.* Ditto.
 5. *Sunshine through the clouds.* Ditto.
 6. *The Corn Field.* Ditto.

THERE is much character in the first of these part-songs, the pattering of the rain-drops being admirably represented by *staccato* notes for the voices; and the *cantabile* melody for the upper three voices, whilst the bass obstinately maintains the "pit, pat," may be made very effective with a good choir. No. 2, "The Fairy Ring," commences with an agreeable, but peculiar, melody, halting on the second beat of the bar in $\frac{3}{2}$ rhythm. The voice parts throughout this Fairy song are uniformly well written; and there is a light and graceful character about the treatment of the words which will always please an audience. No. 3, "The Light of Life," is, in our opinion, the best of the set. The animated subject at the commencement speaks the words with remarkable fidelity; and throughout the composition there are several effective points of imitation, the concluding phrase of the verse being especially worthy of note. No. 4, "Oh, welcome him," is somewhat common-place, but effective in parts, especially where the bass takes the solo, in G minor, to the words, "The night was dark," and afterwards holds on the D as a dominant pedal. No. 5, "Sunshine through the clouds," has an appropriately tranquil theme, which is harmonized with care and judgment. The change to $\frac{2}{4}$ rhythm has a good effect. No. 6, "The Corn Field," is a flowing melody, in $\frac{3}{8}$ rhythm, in the treatment of which some happy contrapuntal effects occur. There is much interest in this song; and it will amply repay careful study. The whole of the compositions in this book are highly favourable specimens of the author's power to write effective and healthy part-music.

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Messe Solennelle, a quatre voix. Soli et Chœurs. Composée et Dédiée a Madame la Comtesse Pillet-Will, par G. Rossini.

(Continued from p. 86.)

Nos. 8 to 10, "Credo." Let it be supposed that the month's interval which has elapsed since the appearance of the commencement of these remarks may more or less represent the break occasioned by the sermon, in the succession of the musical portions of the Service. Thus may be reconciled, but almost only thus, the strange tonal discrepancy between the present and the preceding piece, the peculiarly startling effect of which is manifest so long as one thinks of the two pieces in relation to each other, and may perhaps be evaded when the two are severed by a period of time and a total diversion of thought. The "Gloria" is in F; the "Credo" is in E. The former digresses into other keys for the Terzetto, the two Aïrs, and the Duetto, that intervene between its first and last movements; so, likewise, has the latter a divergence from its principal key for an episcopal air in the middle; but both pieces have so much self unity as each to begin and end in one key, and it is the beginning of the one in a key very remote from that of the other's ending which induces the effect—curious, at least, and certainly unusual—that calls for attention if not for praise or blame. With whatever view the Mass was written, whether for performance on the stage and in the concert-room, or to constitute an adjunct to the attractions of the ecclesiastical celebration, it was first given, and will, for a while, be very far more frequently heard in its secular home; and the taking of lawful means in France and in England to secure its "acting right" (speaking in legal parlance), shows its proprietors in these countries (who are the representatives of the composer), to be desirous of obtaining for it and from it, all the advantage its secular home or ostensible house of business may

afford. Now, performance in the theatre and the concert-room accommodates not the intervention of a sermon (as do the uses of the Church), nor does such performance accommodate the lapse of thirty-one days (as do the uses of the *Musical Times*), between the rendering of any one piece and the next; and any hearer, therefore, who is sensitive to the effect of musical transition, will be shocked or delighted, according to the conservatism or republicanism of his proclivities, by the extraordinary change from the key of F to the key of E, without one chord of kindly intervention, in passing from the "Gloria in excelsis" to the "Credo in unum Deum."

It is remarkable in the present setting of the text, that the word "Credo" is made to recur as the heading of every article of belief; whereas, many purists maintain that the text of the Church is as inflexible as her doctrine, and that though a word, and even a phrase may be iterated when no other phrase occurs between its repetitions, the recurrence to any word or phrase from a previous sentence, involving the transposition or inversion of the text, is quite unorthodox. There is, indeed, the precedent of the "Credo" in Beethoven's Mass in D, wherein the same word is in like manner, though not to the same extent, repeated; but the composer of this wonderful work is scarcely so revered an authority for ecclesiastical as for musical proprieties. There is also the precedent of the English version of the Nicene Creed, wherein the corresponding words, "I believe," thrice recur after the commencement; but it is doubtful if a good Romanist would accept any instance of Anglican heresy as valid authority for tampering with the veritable wording framed by a Council of the Church. Even these two authorities in art and in doctrine, however, Beethoven and our Book of Common Prayer, afford no example of recurrence to anything but the one general declaration of belief, which, as it applies to the entire Creed, so it may be applicable to each of its several articles; but Rossini does more than this, in the recurrence, at the close of the piece and elsewhere, to the initial phrase, "Credo in unum Deum"—not for the sake of bringing back a musical idea, as Mozart does in his Litany in E flat, and Beethoven in his Mass in C, though both without dislocating a single word of the text,—but seemingly, since no other object is discernible, for the purpose of giving a new reading to the time honoured summary of the decisions of the Council of Nice. Shall we then suppose the idler of forty years to have worn but a mask of gaiety in that free commerce with the world which won for him countless admirers of his witticisms and his courtesies, and to have had constantly behind this an undercurrent of seriousness in his contemplation of the Church, which may yet win for him admirers of his modification of her ordinances?

The first movement comprises all the words of the "Credo" down to the important "Et homo factus est." The chorus and the quartet of solo voices are employed in alternation, apparently for the sake of musical variety, since with no obvious reference to any more or less personalism in one or another article of the text, or to any particular expression of one or another passage. The many and the extreme modulations that variegated this *Allegro Cristiano*—a novel, if not a significant definition,—seem also to have no other than a technical purpose; at least, it is beyond me to connect any of them with the expression of the words. As little can I trace any meaning that can join sound with sense in the several recurrences, in different keys and to different portions of the text, of the very ordinary musical phrase first set to the words, "Factorem cœli et terræ." Perhaps the most extraordinary passage in the piece is that set to the words "Et incarnatus est," repeated a semitone higher to "de spiritu sancto," and again repeated another semitone higher to "Ex Maria Virgine;" it is extraordinary in its harmony extraordinary in its notation (having a progression from F flat to D sharp, for instance), extraordinary in its part-writing, extraordinary in its voicing, and very extraordinary in its effect; and its pertinence to the purport of the